

April 2018

TIPS TO GET YOUR BOAT “SHIPSHAPE” IN TIME FOR THIS SEASON

For boat owners, spring is an exciting time because it means boating weather is just around the corner! If you're the proud owner of a vessel, you've probably already started checking your calendar to mark the first day you can take your boat out on her “maiden voyage” of 2018.

There are several important safety and maintenance steps every boat owner should take before setting sail after having their boat in storage over the winter. Before you embark on your first liberating trip of the year, review the checklist below with information provided from [United Marine Underwriters](#) to help ensure you have “smooth sailing” this season:

- Check the expiration date on your flares.
- Prepare Your Battery:
 - Make sure it holds a charge.
 - Clean the terminals and connecting wires or leads.
 - After you check your battery, place it in an approved container with a secure cover and hold-down device. The cover must fit and remain in place when traveling through rough water.
- Check your bilge and take the opportunity to clean it.
- Check your drain plugs. If signs of rust, replace them.
- Check your belts. Change them if cracked, dry, or shiny on the sides due to slipping.
- Check the fuel filters, water separators, and fuel lines. If any show signs of cracking, leaking, rubbing, or wear, replace them.
- Check your water pump and pump impellers. It is recommended to have your pump impellers inspected by a technician, and serviced every 100 hours, or at least once a year. Most impellers need replacing after sitting during the offseason; if an impeller fails, the pump can't function and the engine will overheat.*
- Turn the lights on and replace any burnt out bulbs. It is much easier to replace a bulb on shore than while out on the water.
- If you have a trailer:
 - Check the tires and replace them if worn.
 - Lift each wheel off the ground and give them a hard spin. If you hear rubbing or the bearings “growling”, remove the wheel and clean and grease or replace the bearings.
- Check your insurance policy. Update your boater's insurance policy so you can be sure you're getting the best coverage at the best price.

For questions about boater's insurance, or to request a free review of your current policy, call your local Marsh & McLennan Agency office or email us at letsconnect@marshmma.com to get in touch with an expert consultant. We're here to help!

Sources:

<http://www.unitedmarine.net/blog/index.php/2018/04/04/spring-time-to-check-your-boat/>

*<http://www.boats.com/reviews/outboard-expert-water-pump-impellers/#.WtDQMSjruUk>